

EXHIBIT 3
DATE 3/21/13
HB 471

Representative Duane Ankney
Chair, House Appropriations Committee
Montana State Capitol, 1301 E. 6th Ave.
Helena, MT 59601

March 20, 2013

RE: Please support HB 471 and Farm to School

Dear Representative Ankney and House Appropriations Committee Members,

I have been the Food Service Manager at Boulder Elementary School in Boulder, MT since February 9th, 2012. I am in charge of purchasing, managing staff, and am also the head cook. Buying Montana foods is new to the school but with our FoodCorps service member I've been able to start some farm to school projects like Harvest of the Month and adding local products into the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. We also are able to use some garden produce from the school's greenhouse garden that was build during the 2011 school year.

The grant program in HB-471 is a good investment for the State of Montana, and it will help schools start purchasing more local products. All schools are on a budget and we would like to do more local purchasing and build relationships will local producers. We would like to keep our money local to further benefit our communities, but our budget is tight and we are always trying to stay within budget.

The grant would be especially beneficial here in Boulder and in other small Montana communities because as a small district we have less money to purchase food with in the first place. We have a small school and serve on average 200 meals/day for the high school and elementary school. Based on our average lunch participation, I need to stay between \$3000-\$4000/month on purchases. This is extremely difficult to do and usually meet this limit just with purchases needed from our distributor. We don't have the cushion that some of the larger school districts might to pilot new products. The grant program would give us a little more room to start adding more local products and not feel so stressed about our limiting budget. We could start to build relationships with the local producers and implement their products in our menus on a more regular basis.

I urge you to support and fund HB-471.

Sincerely,

Lisa Giulio